

Commissioner Melrose Stepping Down

In a message distributed to employees and others, Commissioner John G. Melrose announced that he will leave his post as MaineDOT Commissioner in



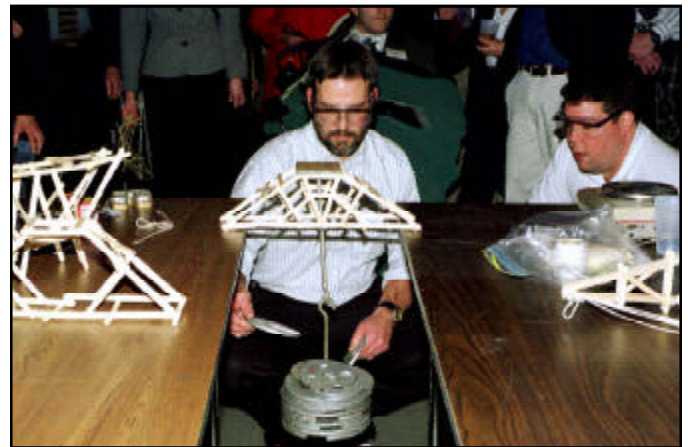
November and return to work in the private sector, where he owned a planning and public policy consulting firm prior to his appointment. "A wonderful experience comes to an end as I let you know my plans to resign," he wrote. Governor Angus King named Melrose to the job when he took office in 1995. Governor King praised Melrose's

contribution saying, "There is no way that I can adequately express my admiration and thanks for all John Melrose has done over the past eight years. He has epitomized the role of a leader—empowering his staff, challenging them, turning problems into opportunities, and always holding to a comprehensive vision of what Maine (and its transportation infrastructure) can and should be. His impact on Maine and our people will be felt for generations." Deputy Commissioner Jane L. Lincoln will take over as Acting Commissioner until a successor is appointed by the incoming governor.

Bangor & Aroostook Assets Sold for \$50M

In a \$50 million agreement that includes purchase of real estate, facilities, and 800-plus miles of track, the Montreal, Maine, & Atlantic (MMA) Railway is expected to take over those assets from the bankrupt Bangor & Aroostook (BAR) Railroad sometime in December. The sale will preserve the BAR system in active status and maintain freight rail transportation as an option for shippers in the BAR service area. The 111-year-old BAR System was forced into bankruptcy by several creditors in January. This summer, Rail World, Inc., a railway investment and

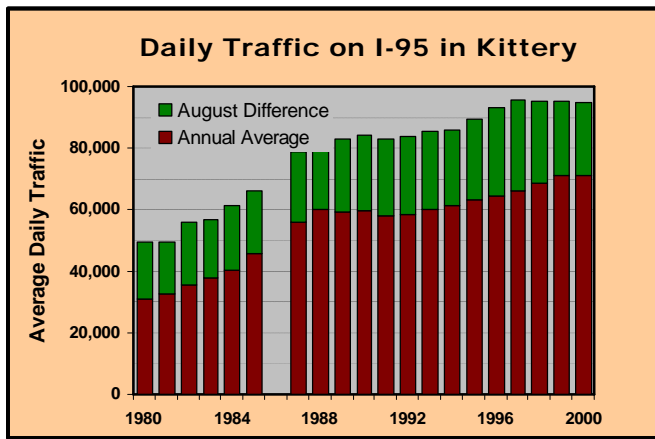
management company based in Chicago, and parent company of MMA, agreed to acquire BAR's assets, including assets of Quebec Southern Railway. Rail World also concluded an asset purchase agreement with Canadian Pacific (CP) Railway that connects the MMA system in Maine, Vermont, and Quebec to the CP system in Montreal. CP will be MMA's primary interchange partner for east-west freight movement.



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Conference Will Highlight Transportation Policy

The Augusta Civic Center will be the venue for the 52nd Annual Maine Transportation Conference on December 5th. Transportation experts from Maine and across the nation will exchange views on the theme, "Retooling Transportation Policy...New Challenges, New Initiatives," and exhibitors will display their transportation-related products and services. The Maine Better Transportation Association, MaineDOT, and the Maine Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers sponsor the annual conference in cooperation with several other transportation community partners. Each year, University of Maine students enliven the conference with an essay competition and unique "bridge-breaking" contest. Up to 500 designers, technicians, municipal officials, consultants, contractors, and students are expected to attend.



Transportation & Economy Report Published

MaineDOT recently published the 2002 edition of “Maine’s Transportation System - Status and Trend Indicators of Economic Growth and Quality of Life.” The report illuminates the relationships between Maine’s long-term economic growth and the transportation system. Similar to the first such report, published in 1999, this second edition updates a list of 22 indicators that provide insight and better understanding of the connections between transportation system performance and Maine’s economic health. Copies of the report may be obtained by calling the Systems Management Division in the MaineDOT Bureau of Planning, at 624-3300, or can be downloaded by logging in at: www.state.me.us/mdot/planning/smd/ti2002.pdf



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Expanded Portland Transportation Center Feted

Concord Trailways and MaineDOT co-hosted a ribbon ceremony in September to commemorate completion of the Portland Transportation Center (PTC). The event marked completion of the facility and the unique collaboration between Concord Trailways and The Downeaster passenger rail service. The project also involved construction of the new I-295 Interchange, a Park-n-Ride lot, and

the station’s platform and trainway. Construction of the center itself was completed this past summer. Concord’s phased expansion doubled the size of its existing terminal to accommodate the expected increase of passengers pursuing bus and rail services. The PTC is a full-service passenger-transportation facility with enhanced passenger amenities, including ticketing services and a variety of connecting ground-transportation options. Since August, Amtrak and Concord Trailways passengers have been able to purchase combined train-and-bus tickets in a single transaction, extending bus connections with two northbound trains and three southbound trains to Bangor and coastal locations north of Portland.



UMaine Advanced Engineering Wood Composites Center

Wood Composite Bridge Wins National Award

An innovative wood composite bridge deck in Maine has been recognized nationally for “making a significant contribution to the wood construction industry.” University of Maine civil engineer Roberto Lopez-Anido received an award from APA—The Engineered Wood Association of Tacoma, Washington for design of an innovative bridge deck on the Skidmore Road Bridge linking the towns of Washington and Union east of Augusta. Working with the Maine Department of Transportation, the Kenway Corporation of Augusta, and UMaine graduate students and faculty, Lopez-Anido designed the wood composite bridge deck that can be installed in much less time than it takes to build a standard concrete deck. The lightweight deck advantage, lower maintenance costs, and extended life of the durable wood composite materials may offset the higher initial cost. The towns, MaineDOT and the Federal Highway Administration through its Innovative Bridge Research and Construction (IBRC) program, provided the project’s funding.



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Mountain Division Trail Construction Under Way

Years of negotiations, planning, and public process culminated this month with a groundbreaking ceremony celebrating start of construction on the first four miles of the Mountain Division Trail. The trail utilizes a historic 45-mile railroad bed that runs from Windham to Fryeburg. This first leg of the multi-use trail begins in Windham and runs through Gorham to Standish, and will be used for walking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, and snowmobiling. Key partners in making the project a reality include the Mountain Division Alliance, the Greater Portland Council of Governments, Portland Trails, the National Park Service, the Portland Water District, the towns of Windham, Gorham, and Standish, and the Maine Department of Transportation, owner of the abandoned rail line. The railroad tracks will be kept in place for possible future use, as advocated by the Alliance.

Foamed Asphalt Recycling Process Gets More Use

2002 saw the growing use of a "foamed asphalt" pavement recycling process that was piloted by the department during the 2001 construction season. MaineDOT's Regional Program put the process to work on about 40 miles of its Collector Highway Improvement Program (CHIP) and Pavement Management projects this year. Foamed asphalt creates a strong roadway base in a process that pulverizes existing pavement and then adds a mix of asphalt, portland cement, and water before compacting and grading the material. The process can yield significant cost benefits, reducing the expense of constructing the road base by as much as 50% over traditional hot-mix asphalt treatments, and substantially improving the strength and impermeability of the base material.

Highway Fund Relatively Sound For Now

With Highway Fund revenues coming in slightly above late-summer projections, resources will be adequate to sustain the Department's legislatively approved programming for the remainder of the '02-'03 biennium. The King Administration's plan to address the General Fund shortfall also includes transfer of some \$9.3 million in Highway Fund surplus to the General Fund, reimbursement for a 1999 infusion from the General Fund to support a number of specific transportation projects. While today's Highway Fund balance is relatively healthy, MaineDOT still faces a \$35 million gap in FY '04-'05 if it is to maintain the present level of services.



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Island Explorer Ridership Climbs Again

The Island Explorer Transit Service on Mount Desert Island once again exceeded the previous year's performance with an impressive growth in ridership. Ridership grew by 17% this year to 281,142 riders in just 75 days of service during the summer season. The fleet's 18 propane-fueled, 24-passenger buses were heavily utilized, with daily peak ridership reaching more than 5,000. The service eliminated some 2.6 million miles of car travel in Acadia National Park, preventing more than 800 tons of green house gas emissions. L.L.Bean of Freeport provided The Island Explorer with a \$1 million gift. That gift, and the purchase of eight additional buses will allow service to continue into the fall season, a time of growing visitation to the Park and its surrounding towns.

The Maine Traveler is available on the MaineDOT website at:
http://www.state.me.us/mdot/maine_traveler/homepage.htm

To send comments or order extra paper copies,
 call 624-3253, or send an e-mail to: Maine.DOT@state.me.us

MaineDOT Employees of the Month



September 2002

Julia Spinney

Utility Coordinator - Urban and Arterial Highway Program

Julia Spinney began working for MaineDOT as a Student Laborer in 1983, and since then has been a Highway Laborer, an Engineering Aide I and II, and an Engineering Technician I, II, and III. Today Julia is Utility Coordinator in the Urban and Arterial Highway Program. Some 60 coworkers contributed to and signed her nomination for this award. The nomination summary describes her as “a cheerful, energetic employee who has donated hundreds of free hours of her own labor to the taxpayers,” and as “consistently good-natured and even-tempered in the face of tremendous pressures.” Some of the other comments included that she is “an inspiration to her fellow employees,” that “her work is exemplary,” that “she really keeps the projects moving...is great to work with...very helpful, always smiling...a good mentor.”



October 2002

Janice Arsenault

MaineDOT Health and Wellness Director

Janice Arsenault joined MaineDOT as Health and Wellness Director in August of 2000. Her nominator stated that, “Janice makes a big difference in a lot of peoples lives,” and goes on to say, “When I first started working for MaineDOT a few months ago, I used to wonder why this person was always doing stretches and all these crazy events. Everywhere I went in the building... there was some more of Janice’s quit-smoking pamphlets and I just wondered, does this person ever give up!” Janice is a familiar and enthusiastic presence at MaineDOT headquarters and seven Division offices. In managing the department’s Health and Wellness Program, she focuses on issues like nutrition, ergonomics, exercise, and smoking cessation, and has had significant impacts on MaineDOT employees’ lives, with associated benefits for the public.

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